

SHORT COMMUNICATION

The South American genus *Spintharidius* (Araneae, Araneidae)

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Abstract. The name *Madrepeira anazonica* Levi 1995 is a synonym of *Spintharidius rhomboidalis* Simon 1893. *Spintharidius* is currently monospecific.

Keywords: Spiders, orb-weavers, taxonomy, synonymy

Thirty years ago, while revising South American araneid spiders, I requested the holotypes of the two species of *Spintharidius* Simon 1893, *S. ceruus* Simon 1893, and *S. rhomboidalis* Simon 1893, from the Muséum Nationale d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris. I was told that both species were listed in the catalog but the specimens were lost and remain so. The identity of the generic name was an enigma and I feared erroneously it would be a senior synonym of *Alpaida* O. Pickard-Cambridge 1889 (Levi 2002:562).

While reviewing illustrations of the lost specimens in Paris in 1958 when examining theridiids, I found notes and illustrations of *S. ceruus* and *S. rhomboidalis*. Both species had a similar epigynum: *ceruus* is a synonym of *rhomboidalis*, which I examined at that time. The diagonal abdomen, the long legs with the first patella and tibia twice the length of the carapace, and the unusual epigynum with a pointed scape having a pair of basal "ears" and lateral lobes, leave no

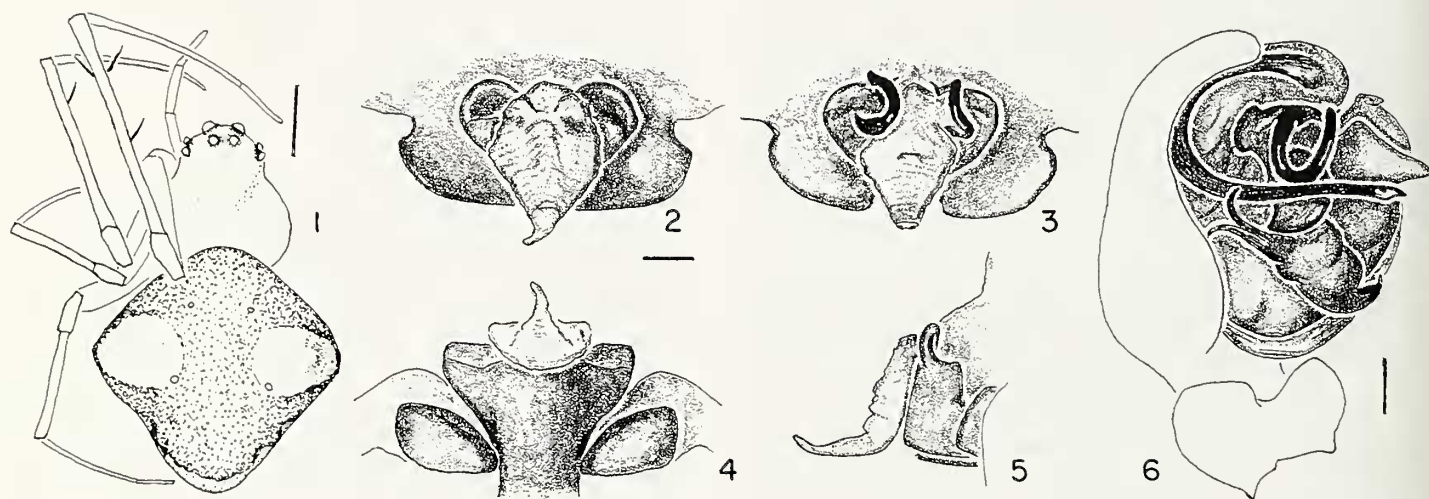
doubt that it is an older name for the widespread but rare *Madrepeira anazonica* Levi 1995.

Spintharidius Simon

Spintharidius Simon 1893. Type species. *S. rhomboidalis* Simon 1893. *Madrepeira* Levi 1995. Type species *M. anazonica*. NEW SYNONYMY

Diagnosis.—The female differs from other araneid genera by having a diamond-shaped abdomen with lateral humps (Fig. 1), thin legs with only a few long setae, and the epigynum with lateral and median plates fused on a base (Fig. 3) and on each side of the attachment of the annulate scape, a scale formed from the posterior median plate (Fig. 2).

The male palpus has a median apophysis with a pair of flagellate spines, and differs from others with a similar median apophysis by



Figures 1–6.—*Spintharidius rhomboidalis* Simon. 1. Female, dorsal view. 2–5. Epigynum: 2. Ventral view; 3. Ventral view, with broken emboli; 4. Posterior view; 5. Lateral view. 6. Left male palpus, mesal view. Scale lines: Fig. 1, 1.0 mm; Figs. 2–5, 0.1 mm. (From Levi 1995, with permission).

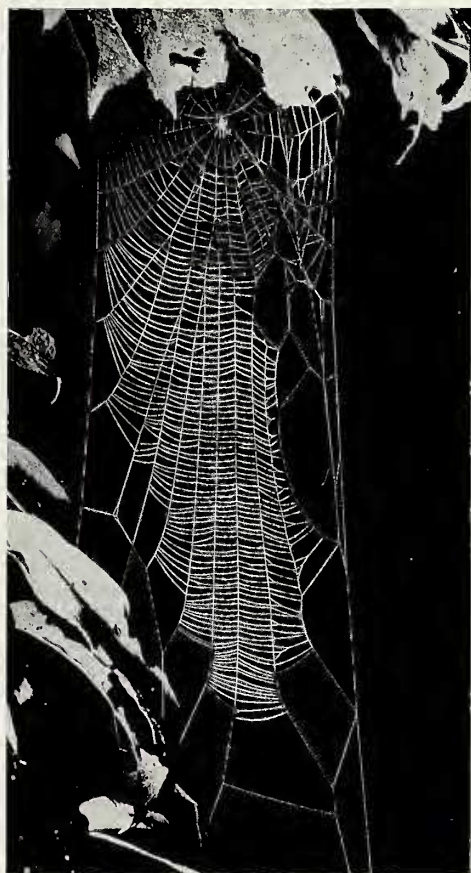


Figure 7.—Ladder orb-web of *Spintharidius rhomboidalis* resembles that of *Scoloderus* (Levi 1995, plate 5; reproduced with permission of the author).

having a U-shaped embolus and a long curved prong as terminal apophysis (Fig. 6).

The spiders make a ladder web resembling that of *Scoloderus* (Fig. 7).

Spintharidius rhomboidalis Simon (Figs. 1–6)

Spintharidius rhomboidalis Simon 1893. Female holotype from Paraguay in the Muséum Nationale d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris, examined.

S. cerinus Simon 1893. Female holotype from southern Brazil, examined. NEW SYNONYMY.

Madrepeira amazonica Levi 1995. Female holotype from Albergue "Cuzco Amazonica," [12°33'S, 69°03'W, elev. 200 m]. Departamento de Madre de Dios, Peru in the Museo Univarsitaria San Marco, Lima. NEW SYNONYMY.

Another name listed in the genus, *S. viridis* Franganillo 1926 from Cuba, remains unidentified.

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